

# PRESS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney  
Western District of Wisconsin  
(608) 264-5158  
TTY (608) 264-5006

---

## For Immediate Release

January 8, 2007

## Contact Person

Paul W. Connell  
Assistant U.S. Attorney

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, today announced that Jesse Mateo Rodrigues, 26, of St. Paul, Minnesota, was sentenced on January 5, 2007 by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to 292 months in prison, to be followed by a five-year term of supervised release, for conspiracy to possess methamphetamine with intent to distribute between 2002 and 2005.

Judge Crabb determined at sentencing that Rodrigues was responsible for distributing at least 13 kilograms of methamphetamine during the course of conspiracy. She also determined that Rodrigues possessed at least one firearm in connection with the conspiracy and played a leadership role by directing multiple couriers to transport methamphetamine from St. Paul to Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota.

Rodrigues is also presently under indictment in a separate case in the District of Minnesota in which he has been charged with participating in a large-scale drug distribution conspiracy along with 22 other members of the Almighty Latin King Nation street gang. Rodrigues is also charged individually with distributing over 50 grams of methamphetamine in that indictment.

United State Attorney Peterson praised the coordinated efforts of law enforcement to break up this conspiracy, saying, "Lengthy sentences like the ones handed down in this case should put all drug dealers on notice that the possession and distribution of methamphetamine in this district will result in very serious consequences."

Three of Rodrigues's fellow conspirators were sentenced by Judge Crabb in 2006 for their participation in the conspiracy: Paul Horvatic, of Duluth, was sentenced to 25 years in prison; Paul Letsos, of Superior, was sentenced to 46 months in prison; and Isreal Flores, Minneapolis, was sentenced to 262 months in prison.

The charges against Rodrigues were the result of an investigation conducted by the Douglas County Sheriff's Department, the Superior Police Department, the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation - Narcotics Bureau, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul W. Connell.

# # # #